

Oral Questions

and be more competitive on all markets. The hon. member was asking for ad hoc job-creation programs to help those who are currently unemployed to find work. These programs already exist. In fact, they were announced this week by the Minister of Employment and Immigration. Millions of dollars are being spent on job-creation programs, and if the hon. member makes this information available to his constituents, they will be able to take advantage of these programs which will help them get through this very difficult period for all Canadians.

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[English]

HOUSE OF COMMONS

REQUEST THAT PRIME MINISTER SET DATE FOR BYELECTIONS

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. Canadians who live in the constituencies of Timiskaming, Broadview-Greenwood and Leeds-Grenville have been denied political representation in the House of Commons for many months. Considering that Canadians in these areas, as well as elsewhere in the country, have been experiencing record levels of lay-offs, problems with mining shutdowns, housing problems, not to mention other difficulties directly involving federal responsibility, will the Prime Minister now live up to his moral responsibility and name the date for byelections in these three constituencies?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, I will do so within the time provided for in the law.

RIGHT TO REPRESENTATION

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Madam Speaker, would the Prime Minister explain to the members of the House of Commons and, more important, to the Canadians living in these areas who have a great deal of difficulty in coping with the problems of the Canadian economy, why he will not give them the right at least to have an elected Member of Parliament, from whatever party happens to win those byelections, in the House fighting on their behalf and doing a job for them? What moral right does the Prime Minister have to deny them their representation in the House of Commons?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, the hon. member wants me to explain to him why the law says what it says.

Mr. Broadbent: No, that is not the question.

Mr. Trudeau: I am telling the hon. member that I will comply with the law with regard to byelections. That is my answer.

MORAL OBLIGATION TO PEOPLE

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Madam Speaker, the law of Canada permits people to lie to one another, but that does not make it morally acceptable. The law of Canada does

indeed permit the Prime Minister to wait many months to call a byelection, and he knows he can set it for many months after that date. We are not interested in the precise question of what is legally permitted to the Prime Minister. We want him to live up to his moral obligations to those people, and their right to have representation in the House of Commons. Therefore I ask him will he not give them the right to elect a member to this House to do work on their behalf, work that they need done in these difficult economic times?

● (1125)

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Madam Speaker, if the House of Commons had made the same distinction between morality and legality as the hon. member seems to be making—

Mr. Broadbent: Pretty basic.

Mr. Trudeau: —he would then be suggesting that the members of the House of Commons acted immorally at the time, by providing a certain delay. If the House of Commons felt that a shorter time was morally right, I am sure its members would have voted for a shorter time.

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NATIONAL DEFENCE

MOVEMENT OF NAVAL RESERVE HEADQUARTERS FROM HALIFAX TO QUEBEC CITY

Hon. Allan B. McKinnon (Victoria): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Acting Minister of National Defence. This seems to be pork-barrel week in the House of Commons. Can the acting minister inform the House what tactical or strategic reasons have convinced the Government of Canada to move Naval Reserve Headquarters from Halifax to Quebec City?

Hon. W. Bennett Campbell (Minister of Veterans Affairs): Madam Speaker, I would be pleased to take notice of the question and provide the hon. member with an answer.

Miss MacDonald: That's not good enough.

Mr. McKinnon: This was surely an important decision and must have been discussed in cabinet. I can hardly accept the fact that the Acting Minister of National Defence knows nothing about it.

REASONS FOR RELOCATION TO QUEBEC CITY

Hon. Allan B. McKinnon (Victoria): All our reserve headquarters are located on a functional basis. For instance, Air Command has Reserve Air headquarters in Winnipeg. The headquarters of our reserve army is co-located with Mobile Command at St. Hubert. What on earth could the Government of Canada be thinking about, to disrupt this functional system by moving the Naval Reserve Headquarters from